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Suffolk (E)

B O R O U G H   O F   B E C C L E S

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR THE YEAR 1949  
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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.   G. McN. CUBIE, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

SANITARY INSPECTOR                E. H. CRANMER, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Municipal Offices,  
Blyburgate,  
Beccles,  
Suffolk.



# B O R O U G H   O F   B E C C L E S

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1949 -----

The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses  
of the Borough of Beccles.

Sir, Ladies, and Gentlemen,...

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1949.

I must acknowledge the willing assistance of the Town Clerk, Sanitary Inspector and all the other Officials of the Borough during the past year.

During the period of this report, Dr. A. A. Gilmour was Medical Officer of Health until 12th June. From then until my appointment commenced on 15th July, Dr. A. C. Gee, Medical Officer of Health for Lowestoft, kindly arranged to make his services available when required.

### GENERAL STATISTICS

Area	2017 acres
Registrar General's estimate of population (mid-1949)	6791
No. of inhabited houses	2312
Rateable Value	£39,367.

### VITAL STATISTICS

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Live Births	52	49	101
(Illegitimate Births)	(4)	(2)	(6)

Birth Rate per 1,000 population = 14.8

Stillbirths (Legitimate)	-	2
(Illegitimate)	-	-

Rate per 1,000 live births	-	19.8
Rate per 1,000 population	-	0.29
(England and Wales)	-	0.39)

Maternal Mortality      -      Nil

Infantile Mortality(Deaths of infants under  
one year old)

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	2	4	6
Illegitimate	-	-	-

This gives an Infantile Mortality rate of 59.4 per 1,000  
live births. (England and Wales = 32)

Causes of Infant Deaths

Suffocation  
 Pneumonia (2)  
 Congenital Causes (2)  
 Cerebral Oedema plus Acute Bronchitis and Eczema

Deaths

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
	56	48	104

Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population - 15.3  
(England and Wales - 11.7)

Causes of Death

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	3	2
Syphilis	1	-
Influenza	-	1
Cancer	12	5
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	4	5
Heart Disease	20	23
Other Circulatory Diseases	2	1
Bronchitis	1	1
Pneumonia	-	2
Other Respiratory Diseases	-	1
Digestive Diseases	1	2
Nephritis	1	1
Congenital Malformations and Birth Injuries	1	1
Violent Causes	3	1
All other causes	7	2
	<u>56</u>	<u>48</u>

Comparative Table for the Past Five Years

	England & Wales	Lon- don	Beccles				
	<u>1949</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1945</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1948</u>
Population			6791	5828	6019	6158	6752
Births			101	110	124	138	108
Birth Rate per 1,000	16.7	18.5	14.8	18.8	20.6	22.4	15.9
Deaths			104	101	100	109	90
Death Rate per 1,000	11.7	12.2	15.3	17.3	16.6	17.7	13.3
Infant Deaths			6	2	7	8	4
Infantile Mortality Rate	32	29	59.4	18.2	56.5	57.9	37.0

In my opinion, the foregoing statistics do not show any significant variations from those of England as a whole, taking into account the size of the population of Beccles.

#### CHILD WELFARE CLINIC

The Child Welfare Centre continues to take place from 2.30 p.m. to 4.0 p.m. every Tuesday afternoon in the Blyburgate Hall under the auspices of the East Suffolk County Council.

The County Medical Officer has kindly supplied the following details:-

Number of children attending during the year	264
Number who first attended during the year	
(a) who were under one year	103
(b) who were from 1 - 5 years	45
Total attendances (a) under one year	1,231
(b) from 1 - 5 years	542

#### DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The following figures have been kindly supplied by the County Medical Officer:-

Pre-school population (0-4)	626
School population (5-14)	912
No. of pre-school children immunised	360
Total number of children immunised	572
% pre-school children immunised	57.5
% all children immunised	74.4
"Booster" treatment 1949	86

#### INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The following cases of infectious disease were notified during the year:-

Measles	19
Pneumonia	1
Infantile Paralysis	2

The arrangements for isolation accommodation are the responsibility of the East Anglian Regional Hospital Board.

#### CLEAN FOOD CAMPAIGN

In the later part of the year the Sanitary Inspector and I had a most useful meeting with the Beccles Chamber of Trade and Commerce. Consideration was given to the best means of ensuring that food would be handled under hygienic conditions. It is very encouraging to report the enthusiastic co-operation of the Chamber of Trade and of food traders generally in Beccles.

#### FOOD POISONING :

No cases were notified during the year.



## TUBERCULOSIS

At the beginning of the year the following cases were on the Tuberculosis Register:-

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pulmonary	15	9	24
Non-Pulmonary	5	7	12

During the year the following cases were either added to or removed from the Register:-

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
No. of new notifications:-			
Pulmonary	1	-	1
Non-Pulmonary	-	-	-
No. of cases added otherwise:-			
Pulmonary	-	-	-
Non-Pulmonary	-	-	-
No. of cases died:-			
Pulmonary	3	3	6
Non-Pulmonary	-	-	-
No. of cases recovered:-			
Pulmonary	-	1	1
Non-Pulmonary	-	-	-

This leaves the following cases on the register at the end of the year:-

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pulmonary	13	5	18
Non-Pulmonary	5	7	12

The responsibility for the treatment of tuberculosis is in the hands of the East Anglian Regional Hospital Board which has recently appointed a full-time Chest Consultant to the northern part of East Suffolk.

## NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

No action, for the removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention, was required.

## WATER SUPPLY

Since the water company was taken over by the Borough Council on 1st October, 1949, regular frequent samples have been taken by the Sanitary Inspector and have been sent for bacteriological examination.

The following reports have been received:-

(a)	Satisfactory	17
(b)	Unsatisfactory	8
(c)	Moderately Satisfactory	15



In view of the source of the present water supply, so near to the Waveney, the need for chlorination will continue until the new supply from Barsham comes into operation.

The unsatisfactory reports were due, in my opinion, to technical faults in the filters, reservoirs or mains; these faults either have been or are in the process of rectification. The red colour observed in the water from time to time is due to the heavy iron content, and although unpleasant, is not, of itself, dangerous to health.

There are approximately 73 Beccles houses without a main supply of water; a certain number of these houses are supplied by street standpipes.

The following report was made by Mr. Lincolne Sutton of Norwich:-

	Grains per Gallon	= parts per 100,000
Total Solids in Solution	-	-
Ammonia - Free and Saline	0.0007	6.001
Albuminoid	0.002	0.003
Chlorine in Chlorides	9.3	13.3
Nitrogen as Nitrates	nil	nil
Nitrites	nil	nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate	trace	trace
Hardness -		
Total	25.6°	36.6
Permanent	11.0°	15.7

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS

Colonies per ml. on agar at 37° C.	Bacillus Present in	Coliform Absent in
None	-	100 ml.

Physical Characters

Clear.

REMARKS: This is a pure and wholesome water of excellent organic and bacteriological quality, and quite fit for drinking and the purposes of a public supply.

I am, Sir, Ladies, and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient Servant,

*G. Hill* Cable

Medical Officer of Health.



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

31st DECEMBER 1949

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B O R O U G H   O F   B E C C L E S

A N N U A L   R E P O R T

OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR.

1 9 4 9

To His Worship The Mayor, The Chairman & Members of the Health Committee.

I beg to present my first Annual Report as the Council's Sanitary Inspector and Inspector of Meat and Other Foods.

I would record that I assumed these duties on 2nd May, 1949.

There had previously been no full time Sanitary Inspector in the Borough, the work being performed by the Borough Surveyor. Food Inspection had been the responsibility of a local Veterinary Surgeon who was employed by the Council on a part time basis.

This division of responsibilities meant that few reliable records of work carried out were available, and it was necessary to build a new and separate office system. For that reason, statistics in this report and the content of the report generally deal with the period May to December, 1949 unless otherwise stated.

ACTION TAKEN UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936.

REGULATIONS AND BYE-LAWS MADE THEREUNDER

Drainage and Sanitation

The majority of the houses and business premises in the Borough are connected to the main sewerage system, which discharges into the Council's sewage disposal works close to the Common and is under the control of the Borough Surveyor. All available evidence indicates that the sewerage system of the Borough has functioned satisfactorily

during the year. The sewage disposal works of the Borough however are inadequate and primitive. Fortunately, they are not in close proximity to dwelling houses and no definite evidence of nuisance is forthcoming, but there can be little doubt that the bacteriological standard of the eventual effluent into the Waveney is far below desirable standards. It is therefore pleasing to know that steps are being taken to abolish the existing works, and provide one which is in keeping with modern conceptions of sewage disposal.

There are two considerable areas of the Borough which are unsewered, - Darby Road and Pudding Moor, which include between them 77 dwelling houses and business premises. The great majority of these premises are provided with pail closets. Some are provided with waste water drainage, in many cases discharging crude into open dykes, but the majority have no facilities for the disposal of waste water.

The Council is fully aware of the Public Health implications of this primitive and in some cases, non-existent drainage, and the machinery for securing the rectification of these conditions has been set in motion as quickly as the legal and not inconsiderable technical difficulties permit.

The principal works carried out by owners of property in connection with sanitary accommodation and drainage at the request of the Council are as follows:-

Pail closets abolished, and water closets substituted therefor	3
Insanitary water closets abolished and new ones provided	2
Water closets repaired	3
Sinks and waste water drainage provided	3
Insanitary sink abolished and new one provided	1
Choked drains cleared	11
Defective drains repaired	7
Cesspools etc. emptied	3



## STORAGE, COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF REFUSE

The collection and disposal of refuse are under the direction of the Borough Surveyor. Disposal is by controlled tipping on the Marsh Estate of the Corporation.

Notices requiring the provision of new dust bins were served on the owners of twelve properties in the Borough during the year and were complied with without the necessity of formal action.

Many premises in the Borough however were not provided with satisfactory bins at the end of the year, and action to remedy this state of affairs is being taken.

## ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES

The Borough is fortunate in having no industries which cause injury to the public health by the vitiation of the atmosphere by smoke or fumes, or in other ways.

During the summer months, a serious nuisance was caused to the occupiers of houses in certain parts of the Borough adjoining the marshes, from the breeding of mosquitoes. Steps to control this by spraying were taken with considerable success.

Other nuisances dealt with included:-

Cleansing of dykes in an offensive condition	8
Removal of accumulations of refuse	4
Nuisance caused by emission of fumes	1
Filthy and verminous premises cleansed	1
Nuisance from private sewage disposal works abated	1

## WATER SUPPLY

The Borough water supply is the subject of report by the Medical Officer of Health. Only statistical details and particulars of work carried out at individual premises by owners at the request of the Sanitary Inspector are therefore included in this report.

Specimens of Borough water submitted for bacteriological examination	40
Specimens of privately owned wells submitted	11
Temporary supplies of water provided in order to dispense with unsatisfactory supplies	2
Unsatisfactory wells abolished and piped supply provided	3
Domestic supply renewed to remedy deficient pressure	1
Pumps over wells repaired	2
Cover to rainwater cistern renewed	1

#### OTHER WATER SUPPLIES

The majority of the Borough is supplied with mains water, but most of Darby Road and part of Pudding Moor are supplied by wells, frequently not readily accessible, invariably of a very poor bacteriological standard and liable to dry up during the summer months. The provision of a piped supply to these areas is a matter the urgency of which is fully appreciated by the Water Engineer and the Council, and steps are being taken to remedy this most unsatisfactory state of affairs.

#### BATHING POOL

The Bathing Pool in Pudding Moor, which is merely an area of the river fenced off, with no attempt made at anything more than the exclusion of large solid objects, has been a source of anxiety from the Public Health point of view to the Council for years.

The water therein is typical river water, no more or no less pure than that of the rest of the Waveney. Partly due to the discharge of the effluent from the Sewage Disposal Works, and the unsatisfactory drainage of Pudding Moor referred to earlier in this report, and the discharge of drains from boats using the river into it, there is no doubt that the water is sewage polluted. This is borne out by specimens taken from the river, which invariably show a heavy faecal

coli content.

Whilst appreciating these facts, the Council felt constrained to open the Pool to lessen bathing in unobserved parts of the river with the consequent risk of accident.

The best safeguard that could be adopted under these circumstances was a frequent bacteriological examination of the river water. Samples were normally taken at three points weekly while the pool was open and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory Service at Ipswich. Seventy-one such samples were taken and whilst there was invariably evidence of the presence of faecal coli, in no case were salmonella or dysenteric organisms isolated. No illness attributed to the use of the Bathing Pool was reported to the Medical Officer of Health during the year.

While this is superficially satisfactory, it must be pointed out that the possibility of the river becoming contaminated between the times that samples are taken cannot be ignored. No amount of sampling can make completely safe, or satisfactory bathing in sewage polluted water.

It is therefore to be regretted that the intention of the Council to provide a modern swimming pool with a safe water has received a temporary set-back on the grounds of financial stringency.

#### RATS AND MICE (DESTRUCTION) ACT

One full time rodent operator is employed by the Council on this work, under the general supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, from whom a grant is received in respect of wages and materials used.

It is difficult to give an accurate and detailed picture of the extent of rat infestation in the Borough. In the newer and residential parts of the Borough, there are few large infestations of rats, but minor ones are being dealt with as they are reported or discovered as a result of routine

visits. In the older parts of the Borough however, there is a "hard core" of rats which congested or disused properties and defective or disused drains among other factors make it virtually impossible to eliminate.

It can confidently be claimed that the Council's rodent operator has greatly reduced and is continuing to reduce the rat population of the Borough and that any lessening of effort would have serious results. A mere estimate of the number of rats killed gives only part of the picture, their great fertility must be borne in mind and it must be remembered that one rat killed now may mean hundreds less in the course of a year or two. This service is of paramount importance in the prevention of disease and of wastage of food.

In addition to routine visits and elimination of infestations of rats, the sewers of the Borough are baited at six monthly intervals in accordance with the recommendation of the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The following are some statistical details of anti-rat work carried out during the whole of the year.

No. of private houses treated for rats or mice	450
No. of business premises treated	21
Treatments of refuse tip, sewage disposal works, marshes, dykes etc.	42
Treatments of whole Borough Sewerage System	2
Bodies of rats found	605
Estimated kill (not including manhole treatments or gassing)	2,200

#### HOUSING ACT 1936

##### Demolition of Unfit Houses

In January and April of the year under review, the Council made Demolition Orders under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936 in respect of thirty three houses in the Borough.



Shortage of accommodation had made it possible to secure the demolition of only four of these properties at the end of the year. An undertaking from the owner was accepted in respect of a further house.

The shortage of houses in the Borough, in spite of the efforts made by the Council in the erection of new houses, has prevented a vigorous drive being made to secure the demolition of unfit houses. It is to be hoped that in the not too distant future, the housing position will permit the Council to take steps to secure the demolition of the several properties in the older part of the Borough which are insanitary and beyond repair.

#### Repair of Unfit Houses

The following works were carried out by owners at the request of the Sanitary Inspector:-

Leaking roofs repairs	9
Defective eavesguttering and downspouts repaired	5
Dampness in external walls remedied	3
Floors repaired	10
Wall and ceiling plaster made good	12
Windows repaired	8
Water closets renewed	2
Yard Paving made good	2

# FACTORIES

The following is an extract of a statement of visits made to Factories and notices served, in the form required by the Minister of Labour and National Service.

Premises	No. on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupier Prosecutio
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, are to be enforced by Local Authorities (Factories without Mechanical Power)	7	7	-	-
Factories not included above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (Factories with Mechanical Power)	44	37	10	-
Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	-	-	-	-
Total	51	44	10	-

## Cases in which defects were found -

	No. of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred	
			to H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector
Want of Cleanliness				
Overcrowding				
Unreasonable				
Temperative				
Inadequate ventilation				
Ineffective drainage of floors				
<u>Sanitary Conveniences</u>				
a) Insufficient	1	1		
b) Unsuitable or defective	8	8		
c) Not separate for sexes	1	1		
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outworkers)				
Total	10	10	-	-



Outwork

(Sections 110 & 111)

Nature of Work	Section 110			Section 111		
	No. of out workers on August list required by Sec. 110.	No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council	No. of prose- cutions for failure to send lists	No. of instances of work in un- wholesome premises	Notices Served	Prosecution
:	2	-	-	-	-	-
Wearing Apparel Making etc.	2	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2	-	-	-	-	-

## FOOD & DRUGS ACT, 1938

### General

The hygiene of food handling establishments has engaged much of the attention of the Public Health Department during the year.

Generally speaking, the standard of cleanliness of food handling is satisfactory in the Borough, but shortage of essential materials, and the high cost of repairs and necessary equipment have been limiting features in securing improvements.

Occupiers of food preparing premises were asked to carry out the following works during the year:-

Provision of permanent supply of hot water for toilet purposes	6
Provision of intervening ventilated space between water closet and food preparing room	1
Abolition of insanitary water closet and substitution of new one	1
Provision of covered dust bins for refuse	2
Cleansing and limewashing of food preparing room	6
Cleansing of yard	1
Removal of coal bunker from food preparing room	1
Cease storing ice cream in living room, and provide satisfactory room exclusively for the purpose	2

### Premises used for Manufacture or Sale of Sausages, Prepared Meats etc.

#### Food & Drugs Act, 1938, Sec. 14

The occupiers of premises required to be registered under this Section were reminded of their obligations, and the necessary applications were received.

Most of the premises have now been brought up to the necessary standard and have been registered; in the case of the remainder the necessary works are in progress.

## ICE CREAM

At the beginning of the year, there were three manufacturers of ice cream in the Borough, but the provisions of the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations 1947 made it necessary for all but one to discontinue manufacture. The vast majority of ice cream sold in the Borough is pre-packed and manufactured in other districts.

The summer was well advanced before it was possible to devote the necessary time to this work with the result that there are still several premises in the Borough retailing ice cream which are not registered.

Arrangements were made for the submission of specimens for Methylene Blue test examination, and some samples were submitted. The number however was not sufficiently large to permit reliable conclusions to be drawn.

## MILK AND DAIRIES

The responsibilities of the Council for milk production in the Borough were taken over by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949.

There are three dairies in the Borough which are the direct concern of the Council. Negotiations for the necessary licensing of these premises were not completed at the end of the year.

## MEAT INSPECTION

Slaughtering is carried out in Beccles in premises under the control of the Ministry of Food.

The attention of the Ministry was drawn to certain urgent matters requiring attention at the Slaughterhouse, both to protect food from contamination and to minimise the risk of nuisance to householders in the area, but it is regrettable to record that these works had not been completed at the end of the year.

Killing is carried out at the slaughterhouse for not only Beccles, but also the adjoining districts of Wainford, Bungay

and Southwold, a contribution towards the Inspector's salary being made by those Councils. It should therefore be borne in mind that the Beccles Meat Inspector is responsible for the inspection of the home killed meat supply of a large district of 28,250 population, and not merely for Beccles, and is in effect a part time officer of those Councils. This has meant that a disproportionate amount of time has had to be spent at the Slaughterhouse on this very important work of meat inspection, and it is no exaggeration to say that during months of heavy killing, it occupies half of the Sanitary Inspector's working day, and generally entails many hours of evening work. In computing the progress made in other spheres during the year this fact should be borne in mind.

It is pleasing to record that in spite of difficulties, particularly during heavy killing, in premises originally designed as a private slaughterhouse, the dressing and handling of meat has been very satisfactory. The co-operation afforded by the slaughterhouse manager and his staff has been of the highest order at all times.

Details of animals slaughtered, inspected and condemned, in the form required by the Ministry of Health are as follows:-



(MAY - DECEMBER, 1949)

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	767	193	246	1645	126
Number inspected	767	193	246	1645	126
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis</u>					
Whole carcass condemned	1	5	8	4	2
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	402		7	54	18
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	42.5%		6.1%	3.5%	15%
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	14	16	1	-	5
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	149		1	-	5
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	18.6%		.8%	-	7.9%

Total weight of meat condemned  
at Slaughterhouse 15.93 tons.

## IMPORTED MEAT

It was found necessary to condemn a total of 229 lbs. of New Zealand lamb during the year due to decomposition.

## OTHER FOODS

The following foodstuffs were condemned during the whole year for the reasons stated:-

Weight	Food	Reason for Condemnation
182 lbs.	Sago	Contaminated by mice
2 doz. pkts.	Semolina	Mould
22 pkts.	Sponge flour mixture	"
32 doz. pkts.	Dessert Gelatine	"
17 lbs.	Bacon	Fly blown and decomposed
64 lbs..	Cheese	Decomposed
$\frac{1}{4}$ lb.	Tea	Tainted
140 lbs.	Cornflour	Contaminated
8 cwt.	Rice	"
18 lbs.	Sugar	"
18 lbs.	Split peas	"
56 lbs.	Dried Milk	"
7 lbs.	Oats	"
3 cwt.	Flour	"

## Fish

2 stone	Prawns	Decomposition
5 stone	Cod	"

## Tinned Goods

44 tins	Canned meat of various kinds	Blown, punctured or rusted
167 tins	Tinned Milk	
12 tins	" peas	
33 tins	" Fish	
4 tins	" Fruit	
26 tins	" Beans	



Weight	Food	Reason for Condemnation
2 tins	Tinned Vegetables	Blown, punctured or rusted
3 tins	" Soup	
6 jars	Jam	Mould
206 jars	Pickles etc.	Sour
8 bottles	Fruit	Mould
11 jars	Salad Dressing	Sour

### CONCLUSION

In looking back on the year 1949, and attempting to assess the progress made during that year, there are several limiting factors which must be borne in mind.

The position of a newly appointed officer, unfamiliar with local conditions, history, customs and personalities is not an easy one. A knowledge and appreciation of his new environment are as important as the technical knowledge of his profession if he is to perform his duties satisfactorily. A "settling in" period during which the official attempts to overcome his shortcomings in these directions, and tries to integrate himself into the existing scheme of things, and during which on paper, at any rate, he may appear to be achieving little, is not only understandable but absolutely essential.

The economic state of the country has made itself felt in Public Health work no less than in other spheres. The unfortunate but inescapable fact that all improvements have to be paid for is frequently overlooked by persons who allege lack of progress or drive in securing desirable improvements. It is essential, though sometimes difficult, for those who have the advancement and improvement of hygiene as their aim to keep a sense of proportion, and view it against the background of a district's affairs as a whole. The logical outcome of a policy of improvement at any

price would be a Borough which was a veritable model of hygiene but in which many of the inhabitants were so crippled by rates and taxes as to be unable adequately to clothe and feed themselves.

The limited staff available to the Council must also be borne in mind. There is a temptation to regard population as the only yard-stick by which the needs of a district in the matter of staff need be judged. In the case of the Sanitary Inspector's Office at Beccles however, this would be a most unsatisfactory criterion, for it would fail to take into account for example that, as mentioned earlier in this Report, the Borough contains a very busy slaughterhouse catering for the needs of a very considerable area. It must be remembered that the staff of the Sanitary Inspector's office at Beccles consists only of the Sanitary Inspector, a rodent operator paid partly by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, who cannot therefore be properly employed on any other duties, and clerical staff shared with the other officials of the Borough. These remarks are not a plea for an increase of staff, which is not sought and could not be fully justified in the present economic position of the Country and the Borough. They are however, a reminder that some duties, however desirable, cannot be undertaken unless it can be shown that they promise results commensurate with the expenditure of time involved, and justifying the neglect of other works of importance.

In spite of these limiting factors however, it can be said that the year 1949 was one of considerable progress. The acquisition by the Council of the Waterworks, is enabling works of improvement to be carried out, and will enable many unsatisfactory water supplies to be abolished when the system is extended. It is a Public Health measure which is a milestone in the Borough's history. Some of the works which have been detailed earlier in the report perhaps appear to be of little importance individually but cumulatively they have a very considerable importance in the condition of the Borough. The condemnation of almost 16 tons of diseased meat at the slaughterhouse alone during the months of

May to December for example is but a small item in a long list of facts and figures, but the implications of a neglect of this duty are not difficult to appreciate.

Perhaps even more however, 1949 could be regarded as a year of preparation and spadework. Among the works which the Council has decided to carry out as soon as circumstances permit are the abolition of the existing sewage disposal works, and the provision of a new one, the provision of a completely new water supply, the erection of a new Bathing Pool, the seworing of Pudding Moor and Darby Road, and the provision of piped water to these areas. The Council's decisions to press on with these schemes, even though in view of economic and other difficulties there must inevitably be considerable delay before they are completed, must be a source of the greatest possible satisfaction to all who have the welfare of the Borough, particularly in the sphere of Public Health, at heart.

To summarise 1949 therefore, it could be said to be a year of considerable advancement in spite of great difficulties outside the control of the Council, but perhaps even more, a year of preparation and spadework for very important advances in the future.

Municipal Offices,  
Beccles.

June, 1950.





